

A NEW SHARP-TAILED FINCH FROM NORTH
CAROLINA.

BY LOUIS B. BISHOP, M. D.

Ammodramus caudacutus diversus, subsp. nov.

SOUTHERN SHARP-TAILED SPARROW.

Type.—Adult female, No. 5661, Coll. of L. B. Bishop, Wanchese, Roanoke Island, North Carolina, May 10, 1901; L. B. B.

Subspecific characters.—Similar to *Ammodramus caudacutus* but darker, with the color in stronger contrast. The dark markings above are much broader and darker, varying from dark chestnut to black on the head, scapulars, interscapulars and tertiaries, in nuptial plumage, and the pale edgings of the interscapulars are buffy instead of whitish. The feathers of the rump and tail are rich brownish olive instead of pale grayish olive, and have broader dark shaft-streaks. The ochraceous of the superciliary and malar stripes is much brighter, and the dark markings of the breast and flanks blacker.

Measurements.—Type: length, 5.94; wing, 2.12; tail, 2.04; bill from nostril, .36 inches. Average of 7 males: length, 5.73; wing, 2.30; tail, 2.09; bill from nostril, .37 inches. Average of 10 females: length, 5.57; wing, 2.20; tail, 2.03; bill from nostril, .37 inches.

Twenty Sharp-tailed Sparrows which I collected on Pea Island, North Carolina, last February, I was surprised to find separable into two very distinct forms as described on page 367 of this number of 'The Auk.' Returning to Pea Island in May I took on the southern end of Roanoke Island a single female of the dark form on the 10th, and a male and female on Pea Island on the following day. On Roanoke they appeared to be common, but I found no others I was certain were of this species on Pea Island, in the few hours I was able to devote to the search.

These three birds differ from Connecticut specimens of *A. caudacutus* taken in May so widely that, considering them in connection with the two forms common on Pea Island in winter, it seems necessary to describe them as a new subspecies. As Gmelin's *Oriolus caudacutus* was based on Latham's 'Sharp-tailed Oriole,' and this bird was described and figured from a specimen in Mrs. Blackburn's collection that was taken in New York, it is evidently the dark, southern form which requires a name.

Two Sharp-tailed Sparrows I took near Tarpon Springs, Florida, in the early spring of 1897, are referable to the new race.

In general plumage *A. c. diversus* has the richest coloring of any of the group, including even spring specimens of *A. nelsoni*. Typical examples of this form in winter resemble very closely some specimens of *nelsoni* in the coloring of the upper parts — much more than they resemble typical examples of *A. caudacutus* — but may be easily distinguished from the former at any season by their larger size, longer bill and very conspicuous dark stripes on the breast and flanks.

In measurement *diversus* and *caudacutus* are practically the same, and intermediates in coloring occurred on Pea Island in winter.

GENERAL NOTES.

Holbæll's Grebe on San Francisco Bay. — On November 30, 1900, three Grebes, which were strange to me, were seen swimming near the shore of the Presidio, one of which I shot. The bird proved to be *Colymbus holbællii* in adult plumage and a female. No others have been seen by me since this date, although a great part of my time is spent upon the lower bay. The only other specimen I know of is a male, No. 1867 of the collection of the California Academy of Sciences, taken December 25, 1882, at Oakland. The Academy also has a single specimen taken at Monterey on December 31, 1894, which is labeled a female and is No. 1433, a record of which is found in 'California Water Birds,' No. II, on page 14. Mr. Leverett M. Loomis, in his extensive work off Monterey, has found this bird very uncommon. It seems to be very rare on lower San Francisco Bay, that is, that portion bounded by the ocean and where the bay branches to spread north and south. It is possible, but not probable, that it occurs on other portions of the bay. — WM. H. KOBBE, *Fort Mason, San Francisco, Cal.*

The Question of the Generic Name Gavia. — In the September, 1900, number of the 'Ornithologische Monatsberichte' (Vol. VIII, page 135), Dr. Anton Reichenow claims that the name *Gavia* Forster is a synonym of *Urinator* Cuvier, basing his assumption on the use of the name *Gavia* for a species of Gull by S. G. Gmelin in his 'Reise durch Russland' (Vol. I, page 152).